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Statement

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Before the
United States Trade Representative
Section 301 Committee
Regarding

The United States Export Association
Petition with Respect to Thailand

Washington, DC
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Of all the activities by any segment of government in reference to tobacco that irritated me most, none exceeded the actions of the United States Trade Representative, who put making a few bucks for various types of American tradesmen over the health of people – usually in a developing country. It was during this hearing that I made my last outspoken statement as a government official speaking to a government committee when I said: “One of the most reprehensible activities of this country is the exportation of disease, disability and death in the form of cigarettes to the Third World”. I gained the respect and accolades of Taiwan, South Korea, and Thailand, but I wasn’t popular with the White House, the Trade Representative or certain Congressmen who also put commerce above health anyplace in the world.

The list of witnesses attached to the end of this statement is representative of strong opinions pro and con towards this particular issue.

It is not unusual for officials of the United States government to meddle in the affairs of foreign powers in a way, which would infuriate them if the tables were turned. The ethical and moral implications of the United States government telling another sovereign power how to conduct its internal sale of cigarettes in order that some Americans can grow rich in their greed while some “foreigners” will die in the process has never been properly faced and certainly not adjudicated morally.